



Eugene Outdoors!

A publication of the City of Eugene Parks and Open Space Division

www.eugene-or.gov



SUMMER
FALL 2005

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WHAT IT TAKES TO MAINTAIN EUGENE'S PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Think parks maintenance worker. What image does that evoke? If you conjured a person mowing, you're probably not alone, muses Parks Maintenance Manager Sarah Medary, who says that acquaintances often make that immediate association when they hear her title. Although mowing is indeed a very important function in our parks, the City's parks maintenance staff is an exceptionally diverse, technically skilled, and dedicated professional group.

Consider the breadth and scope of their responsibilities: Eugene's parks and open space system encompasses nearly 3,000 acres, which translates into approximately 75,000 trees, 27 miles of trails, 76 acres of landscaped areas, 35 sportsfields, 45 playgrounds, 5 skateparks, 150 miles of irrigation pipe, 366 park benches, 291 picnic tables, 243 trash cans, 84 drinking fountains, 20 rental facilities, 23 restrooms, and close to 900 acres to mow. With 58 regular employees on staff, that's over 50 acres of parkland and 1,300 trees per person!

As you can imagine, the expertise and commitment required to maintain these community assets are substantial. Horticulturists and landscape maintenance professionals tend our renowned public gardens, Owen Rose Garden and Hendricks Park rhododendron and native plant gardens; street medians; and garden beds in parks. Certified arborists care for our community's urban forest. We have experts in turf and sportsfield maintenance, and our irrigation staff manage a computerized water monitoring program and maintain complex irrigation systems. Staff certified in playground safety inspect every playground in the city at least once every month. A background in botany, ecology, and other natural resource fields is required to restore

and enhance Eugene's forests, wetlands, waterways, and prairies.

Parks maintenance work also requires perseverance. Take this year's unusually warm, wet growing season, multiply exponentially the work in your backyard, and you begin to grasp the dimensions of the challenge. "The weeds and grass are growing like crazy," says Medary. "It's hard to stay on top of it." Many staff are on-call 24 hours per day to respond to a downed tree, broken water main, or other facility or public safety emergency. Besides Mother Nature, vandalism and graffiti are another source of unplanned work. Staff respond to these and other priorities on a daily basis. "Despite the overwhelming and often tedious nature of this work, parks maintenance workers have an intense sense of pride, customer service and passion about their work," says Medary.

Staff are in the process of developing management plans for all of Eugene's parks and natural areas in order to find ways to maintain these resources more efficiently. For example, the invasive ivy at Washington/Jefferson Park requires constant edging and attracts litter of all kinds. Outdated irrigation

systems tend to break down more frequently and are harder to fix. Most older parks were not designed with a mow strip, demanding more intensive maintenance. By identifying these issues we can more effectively plan for the future. Because of the foresight of parks maintenance staff, these needs have been assessed and incorporated into the new Eugene Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan.

So, as you're biking or driving to work, on a stroll in the park, or at your neighborhood playground, be on the lookout for your friendly parks maintenance worker. They're all around, every day of the week, busy making your parks and open space a safe and beautiful place to be. If you notice something awry or exceptionally lovely, stop and say hello or call 682-4800.

See page 4 to learn about the work done by Bill Dunham, Irrigation Specialist.



PARKS, TRAILS, PLAYGROUNDS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

▶ **Acorn Park**, Acorn Park Road at 15th Avenue: New children's play area and walkways.

▶ **Amazon Headwaters Trail** (see article this page).

▶ **Amazon Park**, off Hilyard Street between 24th and 30th avenues: New walkways, renovated multi-use playing fields, dog park improvements, benches and plantings.

▶ **Delta Ponds**, northern section off Goodpasture Island Road: Access to this natural area is greatly improved with a 10-car parking lot and 1,800 feet of the first leg of a trail that will eventually circumnavigate the ponds.

▶ **Frank Kinney Park**, West Amazon Parkway and Martin Street: New playground and sand play area, bridge over Amazon Creek, and walking trails. Other paths are pending an upcoming stream enhancement project.

▶ **Marche Chase Park**, off Martin Luther King Boulevard: New sidewalks, paths, play area, benches, picnic table, and drinking fountain.

▶ **Monroe Park**, Broadway and Adams streets: Replace play area surfacing, safety improvements, and add new play elements.

▶ **RiverPlay** at Skinner Butte Park: The first phase includes the climber, water play features (the millrace, the rain circle), Pioneer Village, stage coach, swings, and a ferry. Help build the Skinner Butte climber in October! (See calendar).

▶ **Skinner Butte trails**, new and improved trails to the summit of Skinner Butte from Cheshire Avenue and the climbing columns help protect sensitive vegetation and prevent soil erosion by closing unofficial trails.



Awbrey Park



Delta Ponds Trailhead

RIDGELINE REVIEW

By the end of the summer, the new Amazon Headwaters Trail will realize a long-envisioned connection between Amazon Park and the Ridgeline



trail system. The new trail begins at the trailhead off Fox Hollow Road and follows one of the Amazon Creek headwater

branches to the end of Amazon Parkway near Frank Kinney Park. A moderate hike, the trail is about a mile long and gains about 430 feet in elevation. Mountain bikes are allowed on all of the new trail except the last 500

feet or so at which point they are routed west and north to Martin Street. With this link, people can hike or bike along almost the entire length of



Amazon Creek, from Meadowlark Prairie in the West Eugene Wetlands, through the heart of the city up to the creek's origins on the slopes of Spencer Butte, approximately 11 miles in total!

If you hiked the Ridgeline Trail in the past year, you probably noticed numerous improvements. Most of this work has been accomplished through the tireless volunteer efforts of the Obsidians, a local outdoor recreation club, in an

ongoing effort to help the City improve the trail and protect fragile habitat. Since October, over 100 feet of retainer wall has been installed and over six miles of trail has been cleared. Thank you! Call 682-4845 for trail improvement volunteer opportunities.

Dear Parks and Recreation Enthusiasts,

It is with great excitement that I introduce the **Eugene Parks Foundation**. This not-for-profit organization is dedicated to improving and enhancing public parks, open spaces and recreational facilities and services for the benefit of Eugene area residents. To do so, the Foundation will raise funds and seek donations of property, goods and services. We expect to coordinate these efforts with the City of Eugene, while remaining an independent organization.

The Foundation has a number of projects in the planning stages and expects to provide detailed information in the coming months. For information on making a gift, call me, Terry Smith, at 683-1933.

Sincerely,
Terry Smith, President
Steve Greenwood, Vice President
Jim Johnson, Secretary
Steve Johnson, Treasurer
Harriet Cherry, Board member
Art Farley, Board member
Darryl Larson, Board member
Kathy Madison, Board member
Lisa Manotti, Board member
Jenny Ulum, Board member
John Winkquist, Board member

INVASIVES ALERT!

Natural resources staff are concerned about the proliferation of several non-native weeds along the edge of our Ridgeline system. One of these weeds, *Geranium robertianum* or Herb Robert (also known as "Stinky Bob"), is particularly easy to pull, and we encourage all frequent Ridgeline users to remove this plant if you are able to clearly identify it. The Native Plant Society of Oregon lists Herb Robert as a high impact weed. This designation denotes that the plant is very destructive in similar local or nearby ecosystems by outcompeting other native species.

NOTE: Please dispose of the weeds in garbage cans only.

WANTED



photo by Werner Arnold –
www.awl.ch/heilpflanzen

TAKING THE LONG VIEW ON DESIGN

The conflict between what you want to build and what you can afford to build is usually well understood. In these financial times, however, yet another conflict



arises from the gap between what you can afford to build and what you can afford to maintain. In 1999, Parks and Open Space design and maintenance staff convened a series of intensive workshops to bridge this gap, take notes from past lessons, and move forward in a cooperative effort to make sure our new and redeveloped parks are beautiful, functional, and easier to maintain.

This effort was particularly important after Eugene voters passed the 1998 Parks and Open Space bond measure, which brought a much-needed influx

of funding for new park construction and redevelopment projects. Unfortunately, resources to take care of these new parks remained about the same. Park designs already needed to be efficient to make the best use of construction dollars, but they now needed to be even more efficient in minimizing the burden on limited maintenance resources. Specific ideas for how to achieve this efficiency were shared at the workshops and collected in a booklet titled "Handbook for Maintenance-Friendly Design," which has become an important reference for park projects in Eugene.

What did this mean for parks? After six years of work, and the completion of many projects using the new guidelines, it's clear that we now have parks that simply work better. New and redeveloped parks are laid out so they're more efficient to mow, and offer time-saving features for access, maintenance, and routine inspection. New parks are built using strong, durable materials, and apply the best construction techniques and equipment available to stand up to years of heavy use. With good design and quality materials, new parks are beautiful, functional, and easy to use, which also appeals to users who are more likely to treat park amenities with respect. This pays off by reducing vandalism and creating a welcoming park environment.

By addressing maintenance concerns, park designers have also started to look differently at community use, accessibility, and other criteria more holistically and find even more ways to improve efficiency and function. For example, with some slight design modifications, a properly placed curb ramp that offers easy wheelchair access can also allow quick and convenient maintenance vehicle access. Or, setting aside natural areas provides valuable wildlife habitat and passive recreation opportunities while significantly reducing watering, mowing, and other maintenance needs.

There are many other examples of maintenance-friendly design in Eugene parks. In fact, Parks and Open Space representatives were invited to a national conference to present their findings. As it turns out, plenty of other communities face similar circumstances and are looking to Eugene to lead the way in "taking the long view" on design.

NEW ERA OF PARTNERSHIP AT HENDRICKS PARK

The Friends of Hendricks Park (FoHP) was formally incorporated in November 2001, and the beginning of a new era was launched for Hendricks Park. It is truly amazing how much has been accomplished in the last four years by this fruitful, dynamic partnership between the City and FoHP. The Friends have raised funds,



designed and built additions to the park, removed invasive species, restored and built trails, tended the gardens, sponsored educational programs, and provided support and advocacy tirelessly. The park has reaped tremendous benefits from their involvement.

Their list of accomplishments is very long. The following are just a few of the most recent examples that illustrate the unique partnership between park staff, FoHP and the community at large:

This spring, shooting stars and dogwoods were donated by the FoHP for the newly established Native Plant Garden, which was created with the help of the FoHP three years ago. In addition, the cost of a part-time

gardener is shared equally by the City and the FoHP.

For many years, the rhododendron garden has had a regular Tuesday morning volunteer gardener program, but funds dwindled over the last few years due to budget cuts. The FoHP applied for and received an Oregon Community Foundation Grant to support a volunteer coordinator for one year. The FoHP raised the matching funds required by the grant by holding a benefit dinner at Beppe & Gianni's Restaurant last January.

A Hendricks Park trails map has been on a wish-list for many years and the FoHP stepped up once again. They are currently creating the map and plan to finish it by the end of this summer. Thanks to the FoHP, the map will have a place to be displayed.

Two years ago, the Friends designed and built a kiosk. Located in the picnic area, the kiosk also serves as a place to post notices of current events or topics of interest related to the park.

In addition to participating in monthly ivy pulls in the forest, the FoHP helped restore the Oak Knoll area in the southwest corner of the park. FoHP, REI, and park staff built a trail to the Oak Knoll in spring 2003. A management plan is being drafted for the area, and a member of FoHP wrote several grants to fund the plan. With such a successful track record, surely this one will get funded as well.



EVERY YEAR, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE CREWS:

- Prune 1,500 street trees, plant 1,000 and remove 150 hazardous trees.
- Produce and deliver approximately 500 yards of composted leaf mulch to Eugene's 6 Community Gardens.
- Apply 7,000 cubic feet of mulch to landscape beds.
- Plant over 2,600 summer annual plants, 4,000 perennial native and ornamental plants and 36 pounds of wildflower seed.
- Maintain 22 acres of landscaped medians, which equates to 4 acres per staff person.
- Restore an average of 50 acres of streams and wetlands.
- Mow 250 acres of finished turf and 600 acres of rough turf in natural areas.
- Edge 44 miles of turf and shrub beds.
- Spend over 600 hours repairing damage related to vandalism and graffiti.



It's easy and inexpensive to dispose of unwanted items. For more information, call BRING recycling at 746-3023 or the Lane County disposal site in Glenwood at 682-4119. Also, please try not to leave a trace in your parks and open space.



SHAUNA SULLY - Park Amenities

Shauna Sully works to make the amenities in our city parks clean and safe. Her efforts usually go unnoticed but she knows that would certainly change quickly given that thousands of people visit the park on a daily basis and more than 300 parties reserve park shelters every year! "A clean shelter and restroom make such a difference in someone's overall park experience," said Shauna. Although she is part of a six-person crew, she usually works alone on a route to clean restrooms, prepare shelters for rental, and remove litter and illegal dumping. "We have such great parks in Eugene, and it's important to me to keep them nice."

Tip:

If you see vandalism or graffiti in parks, call 682-4800. To find any one of Eugene's 150 playgrounds, pick up a park map at our main office.



ARTHUR JONES - Park Amenities

In his signature tie-dye cap and long white beard, Arthur Jones is sometimes known around town as the playground Santa. "The best part about maintaining playgrounds is being able to hear the children laugh. You can't beat that," said Arthur. He works with four other nationally certified playground inspectors to inspect all our city's playgrounds at least once every month and ensure the structural integrity and safety of the play structures. In addition, his colleagues from other parks maintenance crews pitch in year-round to visually inspect each playground daily. The passage of the 1998 bond measure has made Arthur's life a little easier. "The new playgrounds are a pleasure to work on because they utilize more durable components and designs than the older play structures." (see article about maintenance-friendly design on page 3.)

BRENNAN McCOMMON

Natural Resources Maintenance

Each day is different for Brennan McCommon, who works with seven others on the Natural Resources Maintenance crew to care for the over 3,000 acres of natural area in both the city's parks and the West Eugene Wetlands. One day you might see him seeding native plant species or removing invasive plants at Whilamut Natural Area in Alton Baker Park, and the next day, he might be clearing overgrown vegetation along Amazon Creek. The 600 acres of rough mowing in undeveloped parks also keep him busy. Though Brennan enjoys being out in all of these natural areas, the assignment he particularly likes is maintaining the Ridgeline Trail, which extends 10 miles across south Eugene and affords spectacular views, offering a unique job benefit!



Tip:

It is best to water your lawn in the early morning or evening. Watering deeply every other day will help develop a deep root system for shrubs and lawn. Also, EWEB offers a free home water survey that helps identify leaks, measure sprinkler output, and offer recommendations for saving water and money. Call EWEB at 984-4747 to arrange for a water expert to visit your home.

BILL DUNHAM - Irrigation *(photo on page 1)*

With a push of a button, Bill Dunham controls the sprinkler systems in all of Eugene's parks. Keeping the soil moisture at the optimal level at all 60-plus parks used to be a logistical nightmare, but the city's new Maxicom computer system makes it possible to regulate the amount of water at each site from the central office and achieve high water efficiency across our parks system. Additionally, while Bill is doing regular maintenance checks on site, he can use a remote control to make adjustments and turn the system on and off. The six-person crew inspects and repairs all sprinkler heads, irrigation pipes and drinking fountains at least bimonthly and is also in charge of designing and installing park irrigation systems.

STEVE HESPEN - Tree Maintenance

Steve Hespen is part of a crew that cares for the approximately 75,000 street trees in the city. For the past five years, Steve has been helping make sure those trees stay healthy and do not pose a safety hazard to the public. "We usually prune high branches with a boom truck, but I don't mind if it doesn't reach because then I get to climb," said Steve. He is a certified arborist, and, as he's out and about pruning trees around the city, he very willingly shares his expertise with residents, offering tips about proper pruning techniques to maintain optimal tree health. Steve identifies diseased or hazardous trees, and, if the tree needs to be removed, his Urban Forestry colleagues in the NeighborWoods program mobilize volunteers from the community to plant another tree in its place.



Tip, Don't Top!

If your tree needs to be cut back, prune the side branch tips back to a twig growing in the direction you want. That's Directional Pruning. Never top a tree, because it harms the tree's health, leads to extensive decay, and causes much more vigorous regrowth than what was there before. For more information about tree care, visit www.treesaregood.com. For more information about volunteer tree planting, call NeighborWoods at 682-4831.

DENNIS RATTENBORG

Sports Fields

$A^2 + B^2 = a$ sports field? That's right; Dennis Rattenborg creates two large triangles and uses the Pythagorean Theorem to calculate the distances when he prepares to lay lines for a new sports field. With the math out of the way, he's ready to paint those lines with his special riding lawn mower that the crew designed specifically for line painting. "We used a push system before that was slow, so we added a paint barrel to this outdated mower, and now we can paint three times faster," said Dennis. The two-person crew also added a four-inch mowing device that cuts the grass before it is painted so lines last longer. Since approximately 18 sports fields need to be painted once a week during the busy summer months, this crew has had to get innovative to keep up!



REBECCA MITCHELL - Medians

You can thank Rebecca Mitchell for all the beautiful wildflowers that color your drive across town or the landscaped areas between the rows of traffic. She takes pride in creating beautiful surroundings in areas that are oftentimes overlooked. "I start designing spring landscapes in the fall when I order plants and flowers. I like the artistic outlet," said Rebecca, who has been landscaping the city for more than 20 years. She and other staff on the crew are responsible for planting and weeding 22 acres of medians and 25 acres of landscaped beds in parks across the city.



Tip! Instead of buying a plant and then trying to find a place for it in your yard, consider soil, light, and drainage conditions before you make a landscape purchase. For more gardening tips, call the OSU/Lane County Extension Service Master Gardener Hotline at 682-4247 or visit <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/lane/horticulture>

JOSIAH SHEEHAN

Landscapes

One assignment that Josiah Sheehan looks forward to each year is to help the six other members of the landscape team plant 2-3,000 bulbs around the city. "That means that at least 6-9,000 bulbs will bloom next year. That's amazing," said Josiah. He and the members of the landscape crew are responsible for planting and weeding each of the parks and community centers in the city, which equates to about ten parks per staff member. "That's a lot of leaves to remove each fall and a lot of weeds to pull each spring, but I enjoy it and I know the community appreciates it," said Josiah.

RAISING WETLANDS

When Paul Gordon, West Eugene Wetlands maintenance specialist, enters the scene, large-scale excavation has already occurred. The task that lies in front of him



is to transform this vast expanse of wetlands riddled with invasive species into a self-sustaining, diverse ecosystem where native flowers, grasses, and other wildlife can once again flourish.

It's kind of like raising a child, and Gordon approaches the challenge with that kind of passion. "My job is to do what I can to help make the site as ecologically-balanced as possible so that 5, 10, 20 years down the road, it can sustain itself without my help," he says.

The first stage in the "raising" of a wetland is sowing native seed appropriate to the habitat. In the West Eugene Wetlands, that could be wet prairie, upland prairie, vernal pool, or emergent communities that have standing water for longer periods of time than the other habitat types. As the plants begin to grow, Gordon watches for the "bad influences" that keep native plant communities from thriving. In most cases, the most troublesome are teasel, blackberries and non-native, perennial grasses, such as reed canary grass, ryegrass and other agricultural field grass.

Gordon focuses on protecting the most viable sites first and then decides which strategy will be most effective in dealing with the invaders. (He has a variety of strategies to choose from, including removing non-native plants by hand, mowing or cutting, shading invasive vegetation with large tarps or clear plastic (also known as solarization), scorching vegetation with a hand-held propane flamer or the new, large flamer that is pulled behind a tractor, using controlled fire to enrich the soil and stimulate new growth.) There's also simply planting the right plant in the right place, what natural resource maintenance professionals refer to as a "cultural" technique for fostering native plant communities.

Each site and situation are unique as is the intervention. Though it isn't an easy or fast process, Gordon is good at what he does and has several restoration success stories to tell. There's Willow Corner at West 18th Avenue and Bertelsen Road. Before he and his crews arrived, it consisted of dirt piles over five-feet deep with "moguls of blackberries, hawthorns, and Scot's broom on top of that." Over the course of their maintenance regimen they had to deal with a succession of weeds. Now, vigorous grass and diverse flowering plant communities exist. Look for the purple *Prunella vulgaris*, or "Heal-all," in bloom now.

One of his pride and joys is Greenhill Prairie, across the street from the Meadowlark Prairie overlook. This site was a former pasture grass farm, and the non-native grasses had to be literally scraped from the site and "still you didn't know what you were going to uncover the deeper you dug." Now, it's a vibrant wet prairie, and a sea of yellow woolly sunflower billows in the light breezes.

Gordon invites you to get acquainted with all the wetlands in the West Eugene Wetlands family. Get on familiar terms with the many native species that call Eugene home, such as those pictured, including (from top to bottom): white popcorn flower and blue calico; potentilla; woolly sunflower; white and rosy owl clover; yarrow; and heal-all. For a map of the West Eugene Wetlands, call 682-4800.




SUSTAINABILITY IN PARKS MAINTENANCE


Did you know that the last time you visited one of Eugene's parks or natural areas you were surrounded by sustainable maintenance practices and products? Now some of you may be wondering, "What's the big deal? Many sustainability practices have been around for years."

In many instances, you're right. The City's Parks and Open Space Division has been involved in protecting the community's resources long before the recent interest in sustainability. Some of these practices include using compost to enrich soil, planting trees to filter our air and water, and developing a successful integrated pest management (IPM) program.


However, many of our sustainable maintenance practices are new and innovative and may not be well known to citizens. Did you know we are experimenting with the following to control invasive weeds?





 Solarization uses clear plastic to sterilize soil without the use of chemicals. (See it in the West Eugene Wetlands).


 Hot foam, a new pesticide-free weed control technique, uses very hot water mixed with air, corn sugar and coconut oil to insulate and literally cook the weed down to its roots. The hot foam has been successfully used on moss at Skinner Butte Park as well as on ivy and other weeds at Washington-Jefferson Park, Scobert Park, Hays Tree Garden, Hendricks Park, and the Cuthbert Amphitheatre.



 Natural clove and vegetable oil sprays have been used to remove weeds at Alton Baker Park.


 A new piece of equipment that is pulled behind a tractor superheats water into steam to destroy invasive weeds. (See it in the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park).


 Propane flame units are particularly useful in controlling weeds throughout landscape and median areas during Eugene's wet winters.

 Controlled burns in natural areas reduce invasive species, enhance the soil, and promote the regeneration of native plants, all through a natural process.





Besides weed control, we are currently using many other sustainable methods to protect our natural resources:

 A computerized irrigation system measures temperature, humidity, rainfall, and wind speed in all of our parks and allows staff to fine-tune the amount of water that each park receives from a central computer terminal.

 Green waste from landscape and turf maintenance, as well as leaves from parks and streets, is composted.

 Bio-diesel fuel is used to power our entire fleet of diesel-powered equipment.

 Ecolawn mixes, a mixture of drought-tolerant species, are used on park landscapes to reduce the need for water.

 Vegetable oil is replacing hydraulic fluid in all parks maintenance equipment.

For more information about these sustainable maintenance practices, call 682-4800.




Sheet mulching is an easy way to create a weed barrier and improve the soil. To start, lay down 4 to 6 sheets of newspaper over the planting area. Then, add 3 to 4 inches of compost and 3 to 4 inches of leaf mulch on top of that and plant directly.




QUICK TIPS FROM THE CREW...


From Todd Richards, Turf & Grounds


Fall Is a Good Time to Renovate Lawns

 In the spring you fight weeds. Summer is too hot and dry, and there's not enough growth in the winter. Ground temperatures are still warm, which helps with grass seed germination. Outside temperatures have cooled, so watering is not as critical.


Cutting Height

 Keep your mower blades sharp to ensure a clean cut. Dull blades tear the grass, making it more difficult for the plant to hold moisture and leaving the top of your lawn looking brown.


 Try to keep your cutting height consistent; 2-2.5 inches works well for most lawns.

 Never cut more than 1/3 of the grass plant at a time as it stresses the plant.

Aerating


 Aerating is probably the single most beneficial practice in lawn care because it relieves compaction; allows oxygen, water, and nutrients to enter the root zone; and helps decompose thatch.


Fertilizer


 Limit Weed & Feed fertilizers to an as-needed, spot-basis only. These herbicides are often used when they're not needed.


From Tom Utt, Irrigation

Seasonal Adjustments

 Think of your irrigation system twice a year, in the spring and fall when the time changes. Adjust the timer for the season to save water and money.


 In the spring, check the system well before you need it. Set the timer to water at least three days per week and then change to every other day in or around July 4.


 In the fall around Labor Day, change the timer back to three days per week.

 Before you shut the system off for the winter, drain it to prevent freezing.


From Joanne Glore, Landscaping

Caring For Sick Plants

 Move it. A plant that has consistent problems is probably in the wrong spot. Find a spot better-suited to that plant.

 Keep plants properly watered.

Weed Solutions

 Fill an empty bed with lots of shrubs, perennials, or both. Filling in empty spaces with plants helps to minimize weeds.

WILL OUR PARKS SURVIVE INTO THE FUTURE?

That is a question that City parks staff are taking very seriously. Invasive plant and animal species transported here from faraway lands have already changed the local ecosystem, dramatically in some cases. Blackberry and English ivy have encroached most natural areas in the city, diminishing the biodiversity in these ecosystems. Nutria and invasive bull frogs have displaced native fauna. Climate change, also known as global warming, has raised the average temperatures in the Willamette Valley causing native flowers to bloom up to a month earlier than normal, threatening their survival. What does all of this mean for our local parks and natural areas? It means that we must work hard to maintain the diversity of plants and animals in our community because it is these rich natural resources that make our city one of the most livable and desirable in the country.



photo by Jerry Gowins

One example of a new way that our parks staff is responding to these challenges is our mowing program in prairies. The City altered mowing practices to allow grasses and flowering plants to reach maturity so seeds can reproduce and animal species that depend on these areas can complete their breeding cycles. Additionally, areas that are infested with invasive plant species are targeted for special mowing to control the spread so that park staff can eliminate new populations and keep existing ones contained.

Along the Willamette River greenway and other park lands, many acres of English ivy were removed. Special nectar plants that attract local butterflies are being grown in a native plant nursery by Stream Team volunteers. These plants, along with all the plants grown in this volunteer-run nursery, will eventually be planted in natural areas across the city and will help encourage a vibrant, healthy community of plants and animals.

You too can help protect our natural areas by using native plants to landscape your home and working to keep invasive species such as English ivy out of our natural areas. Volunteers can adopt natural areas through the Eugene Stream Team and improve the biological health of these areas in hands-on projects across Eugene. For more information, call 682-4800.



TAKING TIME TO PRUNE THE ROSES

Maintaining one of the most extensive garden collections in the northwest and quite possibly the nation with only three full-time staff can be daunting at best. But the oohs and aahs of appreciation from the thousands of visitors from all over the country make the work worthwhile. "I am blown away by the number of people who visit the garden every day," says Paul Heard, who has tended Owen Rose Garden for 27 years and

also lived a couple of blocks from the garden for the last 30 years. "Why do we do it? Quite simply because people like the garden so much, and we want to make it look nice for them."

"A rose is a rose is a rose" may not be true at Owen Rose Garden and that may in fact be the secret of its alluring charm. The garden contains 45 of the total 56 rose classifications in the world. And, whereas the modern long-stem roses have replaced the old

garden roses in most other municipal gardens across the country, the southern half of Owen Rose Garden around the gazebo has been cultivated as a heritage garden since the garden was established in 1951. Old garden roses require more space and only bloom once during the season, but the large, ornate shrubs are easier to maintain and generally hardier. More importantly, these roses are a connection with the past. "In the last 15 years, there's been a revival of heritage roses," says Heard. "Perhaps it's all those baby boomers wanting to re-discover grandma's garden."

Just as visitors are inspired to take time to smell the roses, Heard and his fellow gardeners believe that it takes time to cultivate this special rose garden. "This is not a fast-food garden," says Heard. "With roses,

quality matters, and we take one order at a time and invest care in every rose we prune." To do it right, it takes 4-6 minutes per rose. With over 4,000 rose plants, you can imagine the time and commitment it requires to keep the garden in showcase form.

Though roses go into dormancy in the winter, there's no rest for the gardeners. They begin pruning in October and prune intensively through March. As they prune, they hand-pluck the remaining leaves on the plant to prevent disease. Fungicide is applied throughout the rainy season to protect the roses while fungi spores are active. To stimulate growth they apply fertilizer once in the spring and deadhead roses throughout the summer. The millions of spent blooms and debris are removed, composted and reused in the garden.

Because of their careful attention to the needs of each rose plant, very few roses have been lost to weather and there's usually something in bloom year-round. To visit the garden, bike or walk along the riverfront path or drive to the north end of Jefferson Street. Or visit the webcam!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All events are open to the public and free, unless otherwise noted with “\$”.

Tuesdays through October

Tuesday Farmers' Market, Downtown
Park Blocks, 10a-3p, 431-4923

Tuesdays through December

Tuesday in the Garden, Hendricks Park
office, weed/prune/plant, bring gloves,
9a-noon, 682-5324 to register

Tuesdays and Fridays through December

Native Plant Nursery volunteer days
Alton Baker Park, 2-4p, 913-1292 to
register

Wednesdays through December

Delta Ponds Enhancement Project, weed/
plant, 10a-1p, register at 913-1292

Saturdays through November

Saturday Market, rain or shine,
Downtown Park Blocks, 686-8885

August

Fun for All, drop in recreational programs
in your neighborhood park, weekdays,
682-5333 for times and locations

Grandmother's Flower Garden exhibit,
antique quilts and patterns, Shelton-
McMurphey-Johnson House, \$,
484-0808 for times

August 2

Yoga for Body and Mind, Campbell Senior
Center Park, 9-10a, \$ donation,
pre-register at 515-0462

Multicultural Festival, activities, music,
Sheldon Community Center and
Park, 4:30-8:30p, 682-5312

August 4

Summer Skate Park Contest Series, for all
abilities, Bethel Skatepark, register at
10a, begins at noon, \$, 484-2588

August 5

Star Wars, movie in the park, bring a
blanket, Washington Park, 9p,
682-5333

August 6

Tai Chi for Health, Alton Baker Park, 9-
10a, \$, 515-0462 to register

Nearby Nature Quest: Water Wonders,
family activities, Alton Baker Park
host residence, 10a-noon, \$, 687-9699
to register

Redemption Rocks Summer Concert, Alton
Baker Park, 12:30-4p, 344-3370

August 6 (continued)

Shakespeare in the Park presents: A
Comedy of Errors, Amazon Community
Park, 6p, pre-show for children 5p,
picnics encouraged, 682-5373

August 7

Shakespeare in the Park, see August 6

QiGong for All, Maurie Jacob's Park, 9-10a,
\$ donation, pre-register at 515-0462

Washburne Park Band/Classical Series,
TBA, 6:30p, 344-0483

Blackberry bRamble, Alton Baker Park,
7:30a, \$, eugenegears.org, 484-1734

August 9

Yoga for Body and Mind, see August 2

August 12

Raiders of the Lost Ark, bring a blanket,
Monroe Park, 9p, 682-5333

August 13

Tai Chi for Heath, see August 6

Shakespeare in the Park, see August 6

August 14

QiGong for All, see August 7

Shakespeare in the Park, see August 6

Washburne Park Band/Classical Series,
Fame, 6:30p, 344-0483

August 16

Yoga for Body and Mind, see August 2

August 19

La Era de Heilo (Ice Age, movie in Spanish),
bring a blanket, Petersen Barn Park,
9p, 682-5333

August 20

Hendricks Park Volunteer Days, rain
or shine, no pets, Shelter at 2200
Summit Ave., 9:30a-1p, 682-5324

Tai Chi for Health, see August 6

Shakespeare in the Park, see August 6

August 21

QiGong for All, see August 7

Washburne Park Band/Classical Series,
Oregon Brass Society, 6:30p, 344-0483

Shakespeare in the Park, see August 6

August 23

Yoga for Body and Mind, see August 2

August 27

RiverPlay Volunteer Day, erect Skinner
Butte Climber, 9a-2p, 682-4845

Tai Chi for Health, see August 6

Shakespeare in the Park, see August 6

August 27 (continued)

Walk for the Gold, Eugene/Springfield
Special Olympics benefit, Alton Baker
Park, 9a-noon, \$, 431-3245

August 28

RiverPlay Volunteer Day, erect Skinner
Butte Climber, 9a-2p, 682-4845

Recovery Rocks Celebration, Willamette
Family benefit, music/crafters, Alton
Baker Park, noon-6p, 343-2993 x.104

Shakespeare in the Park, see August 6

QiGong for All, see August 7

Washburne Park Band/Classical Series,
Eugene Symphonic Band, 6:30p,
344-0483

August 30

Yoga for Body and Mind, see August 2

September 4

Washburne Park Band/Classical Series,
TBA, 6:30p, 344-0483

September 5

Washburne Park Band/Classical Series,
Junction City Brass, 6:30p, 344-0483

Prefontaine Trail Restoration Run, Oregon
Track Club and Masters, Alton Baker
Park, time TBA, 344-8106

September 10

Composting Workshop, 10a-noon,
Matthews Community Garden at
15th & Hayes, 682-5542

September 11

Asian Kite Festival, Hilyard Community
Center, 2-6p, 988-9061

Eugene Celebration Run/Walk, Alton
Baker Park, 9a, \$, 686-0527

September 18

Walk to D'feet ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease),
Alton Baker Park, 11a, \$, walk@alsa-
or.org or (503) 238-5559

September 24

Hendricks Park Volunteer Days, see August
20

September 30 – October 2

Eugene Celebration, 681-4108 or
eugenecelebration.com

October 1

Soroptimist Walk for Life, EWEB plaza,
9:15a, 687-0402

October 2

Memory Walk, Alzheimer Assoc. benefit,
Greenway Bridge, 1p, \$, 345-8392

October 8

America's Walk for Diabetes, Alton Baker
Park, breakfast at 8:30a, 10a,
343-0735 x.7299

The Great Rotary Duck Race, pancake
breakfast, booths/music, Alton
Baker Park, 8:30a until race at noon,
rotaryduckrace.com

Composting Workshop, GrassRoots
Garden, 1465 Coburg behind St.
Thomas Episcopal Church, 10a-noon,
682-5542

October 22

RiverPlay Volunteer Day, help build
Pioneer Village, 9a-2p, 682-4845

Lane County Heart Walk, American Heart
Assoc. benefit, Alton Baker Park, 8a,
americanheart.org, 344-6345

Composting Workshop, see October 8

Hendricks Park Volunteer Days, see
August 20

October 29

Haunted Hike, Nearby Nature, Alton
Baker Park, time TBA, \$, 687-9699

November 12

Composting Workshop, see October 8

November 19

Hendricks Park Volunteer Days, see
August 20



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by phone, mail, e-mail, or through the web.

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